



Doctor's Orders by the dark inside me

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Summary: What's so important about one night out for Eleven? The logical conclusion to Hopper and Owens' meeting at the pub. Strictly my headcanon. Season 2 spoilers!

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Note - I don't own Stranger Things.

Doctor's Orders

Hopper stared in flabbergasted awe at the slip of paper he'd just been handed, carefully reading the words over and over again. ***State of Indiana. Certificate of Birth. Jane Hopper.*** "I thought-

"Sometimes I impress even myself," Dr. Owens quipped with a satisfied nod, and picked up his sandwich again. "Still, I'd let things cool off for a while if I were you."

Hopper folded the envelope, and stuffed it eagerly into his pocket. "How long is a *while*?" he asked casually, taking a deep breath.

"Wanna be safe? I'd give it a *year*."

"A year?" Hopper made an assertive grab for the leftover half of Owens' sandwich as he mulled over the implications. The doctor didn't even flinch. He took a bite, and chewed in further contemplation. "What about *one night* out?" he finally asked.

"One night?" Owens repeated.

"Yeah, how risky would *that* be?" Hopper took another careful bite, and eyed Owens coolly.

"What's so important about *one night*?" The doctor's eyes narrowed.

Hopper swallowed his mouthful of sandwich. *Where to even start?* "Well, you see, doc, about a year ago now, Eleven kinda hit it off with this other kid from that group Will hangs out with. Seems like they're absolutely *crazy* for each other."

Owens cracked a grin. "Ohhhh. Puppy love. Is that it?"

Hopper winced and rubbed his temples. "I... don't really know, doc. They never saw each other again for an entire year, until a month ago when all that *insane* shit went down at the lab." He stopped and carefully considered his next words. "I had to... keep Eleven hidden away from prying eyes after that first Upside Down incident. It was too damn *risky*. And yet, this entire time her and Wheeler have been pining hard for each other. One year later, and they're *both* still head over heels. Anyone else would have given up and moved on by now."

Owens nodded in understanding. "Wheeler, you said the boy's name was?"

"Yeah. Mike Wheeler." Hopper allowed himself a small smile of his own. "He invited Eleven to this cheesy school dance. The Snow Ball, they call it. Next week."

"Oh, hell!" the doctor exclaimed, and let out a loud chuckle. "Then I suppose *one night* won't hurt. She *did* save our lives, after all. And if this is really how you say it is, then it'll be an amazing milestone for them both." He paused and his eyes unfocused in thought. "Mike Wheeler. Mike Wheeler... oh, he came in with Will that night we rescued you from the tunnels, right? Pale dark haired kid?"

Hopper looked down at the table. "Yeah, that's him." The unpleasant memories of that night still gnawed at his brain.

Owens considered for a moment. "Gotta say, he seems like a good sort, Chief. Even when things were getting dire, he *never* once gave up on Will. Mike's definitely got my respect for that." He took a sip of his beer and gestured. "Eleven... Jane could do a lot worse. They're going to make *one hell* of a couple."

Hop tried his hardest not to even think about the implications of that statement. He instead settled for another bite of Owens' sandwich.

"So doc, what is it you're gonna do with all your copious spare time now?" he asked, skillfully changing the subject.

Owens folded his arms thoughtfully. "Well, I did see an opening at

the Hawkins Clinic for a new doctor. General practitioner work. I've thrown my hat in the ring, it'll be nice to do some civvy work for a change. Y'know, help *normal* people out instead of pissing my life away on all that secret spooky government crap." He leaned closer to Hopper. "I can't unsee any of the shit that went down at the lab, and it's gonna give me nightmares for *years*. Guess this is my chance to make things right."

Hopper scratched his beard, quietly impressed despite his earlier misgivings. He started to feel a sense of begrudging respect for this Owens character. *At least he seems nothing like that psychopath Brenner.*

Owens' voice cut into his reverie one final time. "And hey, Chief. The Mind Flayer might be gone, but somebody has to stick around and keep an eye on Will." He raised his beer at Hopper in salute. "How does every Wednesday at 10am sound?"

Even Dr. Owens ships Mileven.

Yes, this does tie into 'Winter with Eleven' somehow :)